
235.65

Infant Formula Returns

Overview

Policy Infant formula and checks for infant formula may be returned to a WIC clinic when an infant develops an apparent intolerance to the formula being used and a prescribing authority prescribes another formula. Local WIC agencies may replace both returned infant formula and unspent food instruments for infant formula.

Note: Infant formula cannot be returned to or exchanged at vendors.

Local agency policies Local agencies must establish policies requiring participants to bring formula to an agency office (either the WIC office or an outreach office) rather than the clinic site, as long as this does not place an unreasonable barrier to the return of formula.

The policy must also address procedures for inspection of formula when it is returned to the agency and disposal if it cannot be accepted.

The agency policy must be available for review during the local agency office visit.

Minimum inspection At a minimum the policy should address the following points when completing inspection of the product:

- Expiration date;
 - Assurance that the container has not been opened and/or tampered with;
 - Clean, undented container;
 - Product label intact and not missing;
 - Product storage (i.e. hot vehicle, frozen, etc.)
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Overview, Continued

Disposal of formula

Some product will not meet minimum inspection and must be disposed of and not re-distributed to WIC participants. Best practices for disposal procedures includes but are not limited to:

- Dispose of contents in a separate trash container from the can.
 - Dispose of formula in small batches to avoid large quantities of formula in the trash.
 - Implement practices to ensure the public is not “dumpster diving” and removing formula from the trash.
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Donated formula

Groups or individuals wishing to donate unused formula should be directed to the local food bank or food pantry. Donations should not be accepted by a WIC agency.

Indicating supply of on-hand formula

If you are concerned that returned formula may expire before another participant in your agency needs it, contact the state WIC office and provide information about the formula supply for publication in the *Friday Facts*. This communication between agencies can facilitate the use of formulas before their expiration dates.

Reissuing Food Instruments (FIs) or Cans of Formula

Reissuing FIs

The CPA should communicate with the health care provider about the proposed formula change. When a change is authorized, the CPA has discretion in determining the amount of formula to reissue after conversation and agreement by the participant that the quantity is sufficient to meet needs. The table below describes possible situations.

IF the participant returns...	THEN...
With unspent formula benefits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create the new food package and verify it. 2. Click on the Food Benefits branch of the navigation tree and verify the correct months are checked for reissuance. 3. Issue benefits. 4. Carefully review the food benefits print out to verify the correct items were reissued. 5. Ask the parent/guardian/participant to sign the signature pad. <p>Note: Purchases are accounted for in the reissued balances.</p>

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Reissuing Food Instruments (FIs) or Cans of Formula, Continued

Reissuing FIs, continued

IF the participant returns...	THEN...
unopened cans of formula (participant has purchased some or all of the issued formula in the current issuance period)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspect the unused formula per local agency policy. Only unused formula meeting the inspection guidelines may be replaced. 2. Click on the Returned Formula panel of the Foods tree view. 3. Click on "Get Balance". <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A row in the grid displays the name of the formula available for return. 4. Enter the number of cans of formula returned. 5. Create a new food package and verify it. 6. Issue benefits. 7. Carefully review the food benefits print out to verify the correct items were reissued. 8. Ask the parent/guardian/participant to sign the signature pad. <p>Note: The data system will automatically calculate the appropriate quantify of formula to be issued and adjust benefits on the eWIC account.</p>

Issuing cans of formula

If your agency has formula on-hand that matches the participant's new prescription, you may issue the cans of formula. You may issue any combination of **benefits** and formula as long as at least one **benefit is on the eWIC account** to the participant. This **eWIC account** can contain formula or other foods if the participant is receiving a food package that allows other foods.

Note: The same maximum number of ounces of formula applies when cans of formula is issued or a combination of cans and FIs are issued.

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Reissuing Food Instruments (FIs) or Cans of Formula, Continued

**Care plan
needed if
formula issued**

If you issue cans of formula, generate a nutrition care plan for the participant and record the following information:

- The name of the formula provided,
 - The number of cans issued, and
 - A brief description of the current feeding plan.
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